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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

~~INTELLIGENCE REPORT~~

25X1A2g

COUNTRY Siam - French Indo China

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ DATE: 25X1A6a

INFO. [REDACTED]

SUBJECT Background of Free Lao Movement

DIST. 17 December 1946

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PAGES 2

ORIGIN [REDACTED]

SUPPLEMENT

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1. Before the end of the war, the Free Thai underground in northeastern Siam was under the command of Nai Tiang Sirikhan, a former professor at the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in Bangkok; he is a native of Sakol Nakorn. Working with Nai Tiang were a number of French Laos, the most important of whom was Tao Oon. Tao Oon had spent some time in the Siamese army and was sent to northeastern Siam by Marshal Pibul Songgram, then Premier of Siam. After the fall of the Pibul regime, Tao Oon was recruited by Nai Tiang for work with the underground. Among the Free Thai in the northeast were many police officials of the Siamese government. A very strong bond of sympathy and friendship developed among the various participants.
2. At the end of the war the Free Thai movement was more or less disbanded and the French Laos went back to their country, but the bond of sympathy remained.
3. The Free Lao Government was established before the return of the French; Tao Oon became one of the cabinet members. The French began the re-occupation of Laos with a great display of force. At this time Prince Souphanvong, a brother-in-law of King Sisavongvong, returned to Laos from Annam with his Annamite wife, to take command of the Free Lao troops. Tao Oon also became one of the Free Lao military leaders. During the campaign in Laos, the Free Lao troops were forced to take refuge in Siam many times. Here they received help and supplies from their old friends, the Thais. After the fall of Vientiane to the French, the Free Lao cabinet and troops took refuge en masse in Siam.
4. The large Annamite population of the Lao provinces had fought with the Laos against the French, even after the Franco-Viet Nam agreement of 7 May. Consequently, the Annamites evacuated en masse as well.
5. From that time on, a series of raids took place back and forth along the Mekong between the French and Free Laos. The principal raids were those of Hin Boon and Tha Bo which occurred in May and early June 1946 respectively.

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6. a number of the Free Lao cabinet members came to Bangkok, including Chao Petsarath, the Lao Elder Statesman and brother-in-law of King Sisavongvong; Chao Souvana Phomma, a younger brother of Chao Petsarath; Phya Kam Mao, Premier; Tao Oon, Foreign Minister. Other important personages remained in Siamese border towns along the Mekong.
7. During this period Nai Tiang kept in close contact with his Free Lao friends. He acted as a link between them and the Siamese Government, or rather, with his close friend Nai Tridi Bhanomyong. Nai Tiang has held cabinet posts in various governments since the end of the war. It was he who was responsible for organizing the work of aid to the Lao and annamite refugees. He was also charged with the care and control of the Lao princes and cabinet members.
8. Prince Petsarath and Prince Souphanavong have maintained a "lofty" condescending attitude toward many Siamese, in marked contrast to Phya Kam Mao and Tao Oon, who are very cooperative and show appreciation for Siamese aid.

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